

## **CITY OF BELMONT**

### **PLANNING COMMISSION**

#### **ACTION MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2007, 7:00 PM**

Chair Parsons called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at One Twin Pines Lane, City Hall Council Chambers.

1. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Parsons, Frautschi, Horton, Mayer, McKenzie, Mercer, Wozniak  
Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Community Development Director de Melo (CDD), Senior Planner DiDonato (SP), Associate Planner Walker (AP), Assistant Planner Gill (AP), City Attorney Zafferano (CA), Recording Secretary Flores (RS)

2. AGENDA AMENDMENTS - None

3. COMMUNITY FORUM (Public Comments)

George Kranen, Belmont resident and Secretary of the San Juan Canyon Preservation Trust, informed the Commission that the Trust is changing its name to the Belmont Open Space Trust (BOST) in order to reflect its expanded mission. He urged all Belmont residents to familiarize themselves with open space and recreation issues as the City Council election draws near, invited them to attend candidate forums, ask candidates where they stand on open space issues and then vote on November 6th.

Hartley Laughead, Belmont resident, invited the Commission and audience to a Candidates Night sponsored by the Neighborhood Associations at the Library on Wednesday, September 26th at 7:00 p.m.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

4A. MINUTES OF AUGUST 21, 2007

MOTION: By Vice Chair Frautschi, seconded by Commissioner Mayer, to accept the Draft Minutes of August 21, 2007, as presented.

Ayes: Frautschi, Mayer, Horton, McKenzie, Mercer, Wozniak, Parsons  
Noes: None

Motion passed 7/0

5. OLD BUSINESS

5A. 630 Kingston Road – Review of Final Landscape/Irrigation Plan and Retaining Wall

SP DiDonato summarized the staff memorandum, recommending approval and answering questions from the Commission. SP DiDonato noted that there is a mistake on the plans. GIS identifies Virginia Avenue as an extension of Kingston Road. Regarding a fence on top of the retaining wall at the front of the project site, SP DiDonato deferred the issue to the applicant, since a fence is required if the wall is over 30" at any one point, and no fence is shown on the plans.

Dale Meyer, architect, clarified that the retaining wall is in 6 steps but each step is only 1½ feet; the difference between the bottom and top of the grade is 9'. The plan is to cover the wall with dirt as it steps down and plant a wild lilac plant that cascades so it will be covered up the hill over a period of time. He explained the retaining wall system and plans for mixed colored rocks, estimated that it will take 8 to 10 truck loads of dirt, and stated that there will be no off-loading of dirt from the property.

Commissioner Mercer applauded the applicant for bringing in a whole new retaining wall system, which will be more environmentally friendly with respect to drainage and appearance; instead of vertical walls they will be roughly a 45° slope, which when it is all grown up will look like very strong hillside. She invited the applicant back in a year to share photos and perhaps use it as a resource for other people.

MOTION: By Commissioner Wozniak, seconded by Commissioner Mercer, adopting the resolution approving the Final Landscape/Irrigation Plan for 630 Kingston Road (Appl. 2006-0053), with the addition that a fence on the driveway retaining wall will be required at the building permit stage.

Ayes: Wozniak, Mercer, Horton, Mayer, McKenzie, Parsons

Noes: None

Abstain: Frautschi

Motion passed 6/0/1

## 6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

### 6A. PUBLIC HEARING – 1906 Lyon Avenue

To consider a Conditional Use Permit, Variance and Design Review to install a T-Mobile Wireless Telecommunications facility, consisting of six (6) panel antennas mounted on three (3) 15-foot poles attached to the existing Mid Peninsula Water District water tanks, and four detached equipment cabinets.

Appl. No. 2007-0006; APN: 044-051-140; Zoned: R-1B (Single Family Residential)

CEQA Status: Recommended Categorical Exemption per Section 15303, Class 3(e)

Applicant: Tasha Skinner on behalf of T-Mobile

Owner: Mid Peninsula Water District

Project Planner: Jennifer Walker (650) 595-7453

AP Walker summarized the Staff Report, adding that staff had received one written response and one phone call from neighbors who opposed the project. Responding to questions raised by Commissioners, AP Walker stated that: 1) this location was selected because another location on Mezes that was considered did not have vehicular access, power or utility extensions; 2) health and safety statistics were cited to the neighbors from the RF Report and the building code insures that the tower will not fall down; 3) the applicant indicated that the once-a-month maintenance visit would generate less traffic than that of a residential use; 4) there is no involvement with the City of Belmont – the lease arrangement is between T-Mobile and Mid-Peninsula Water District (MPWD); and 5) she would look into the height of the antennas relative to the altitude of the hill.

Alex Forren, and other representatives of T-Mobile, described the project in detail, and responded to questions and concerns as follows:

- The water tank is the only site that meets the criteria for height, vehicular access and access to power, telephone lines and utilities.
- When fully operational the project will provide enhanced E-911 services for calls made by cell phones.
- A total of four people attended the community meeting, which was noticed to a 300' radius. He felt that a majority of the concerns raised at the meeting were addressed in the Conditions of Approval and, in order to provide an extra level of assurance regarding concerns about noise, T-Mobile had submitted an acoustics dispersion model to staff that morning which shows that the equipment will meet the City's day- and night-time noise standards in a residential district.
- The alternative MPWD property previously discussed is bare land; there was a tank there at some point but it has been removed. This site would require a new monopole, and from a construction standpoint, that would require a crane and some heavy trucks. They would have a very hard time bringing in the crane and there is no power or utilities on the site. It would be very cost prohibitive and may not even be possible.
- Regarding maintenance traffic, the sites are visited on a monthly basis by technicians, who would use the access gate, park the vehicle within the boundaries of the property, work on the equipment during regular business hours and be back the following month. There would be very little traffic after the initial

construction phase.

- Hammett & Edison, Consulting Engineers, has analyzed the site and found that it complies with FCC guidelines. The maximum calculated level at any nearby home at ground level is less than 1% of the FCC limit.

Chair Parsons opened the Public Hearing.

Robert Miller, resident of Mezes Avenue, spoke in opposition to the project, asking the Commission to enforce the ordinances that are in place for the property owners' protections and adding that the applicant is not a local company and the project will not benefit the City of Belmont

Joe Iffla, resident of Mezes Avenue, spoke in opposition to the project, noting that any emission or noise will have a negative impact on property values and could find nothing positive about the proposal.

David King, resident of Mezes Avenue, spoke in opposition to the project, noting that T-Mobile reception is fine at this time, and was concerned mainly about the visual impact.

Cecil Nelson, resident of Lyon Avenue, stated that the added antennas will be visible from his windows, was concerned about noise impacts, and objected to any further development of the site.

Jean Nelson, resident of Lyon Avenue, expressed concerns that the tall antennae will create whipping noise which will be heard in her bedroom, the steep slope will require steps, there are no trees that will disguise it, and that the Water Company would lease more of their land, resulting in a forest of antennas.

Christopher Varga, resident of Lyon Avenue, was strongly opposed to erection of the cell towers and made the following points: he has T-Mobile services and has no reception problem in his neighborhood; disagreed that they will be screened by existing vegetation and it is already an eyesore from many areas; the Variance going higher in the sky will detract buyers from coming to the neighborhood; the jury is still out on the safety of cell phone radio frequencies; there is a perceived safety risk that further reduces their property values.

MOTION: By Commissioner Mayer, seconded by Commissioner McKenzie, to close the Public Hearing. Motion passed 7/0.

Commissioners' comments are summarized as follows:

Commissioner Wozniak:

- Troubled by the fact that they had more than the usual number of people come to the meeting to say that they have a lot of issues with this project.
- The project is right on the border of San Mateo, will benefit San Mateo considerably and there was nobody from San Mateo at the meeting saying they want it and nobody came from Belmont to say they want better coverage. She did not know if 7' would be acceptable to the neighbors, but she did not see a benefit in proportion to the height of the towers.
- The ambient noise of 55 db is loud, and if that hum is going to go on all the time either it has to be mitigated or they have to look at something else.
- The water tower was there when the people moved in but it has been enlarged – the use of the site has been increased and intensified.
- The wind noise is a possible factor that could be a problem.
- The visual impact is substantial in that it will be sticking out into the air, she did not know if the trees would ever grow around it, and if they did would that be a good thing for the towers.

Commissioner Mercer:

- Shared Commissioner Wozniak's concerns.
- The constant hum could be partially mitigated by a roof. She would want to see a roof on the structure because of the noise and to prevent vandalism.
- Concerned about the visibility – not integrated into the site well. Requires landscaping and should be located further down the grade to reduce the grading and to lower the line of view to the building, and it needs to be surrounded by shrubs.

- Could not see a distinct advantage between the 7' height and the 15' height of the tower, and felt that a reasonable compromise would be to accept a lower tower.
- There would be significantly less sway and potential for wind noise if it were lowered to 7'. They're not gaining a significant amount of coverage by doubling the height.
- All of the benefit for this goes to the San Mateo residents and she did not believe they had even been notified about the issue.

Commissioner Horton:

- Belmont would get more benefit than San Mateo. They've approved them before and set precedents on other water tanks in other residential neighborhoods. It's a public-zoned area and Belmont has a zoning ordinance that encourages mounting antennas to things that exist. If T-Mobile doesn't build this they would build a monopole somewhere else, which she thought would be just another eyesore vs. attaching it to something that already exists.
- The applicant should provide screening in the way of trees, particularly on the Lyon side, and they should put a roof on the building. Other applicants have roofs on their buildings.
- They probably need to go with something lower. 58' is the highest they have ever approved.
- Did not see a reason to deny the application but felt they would have to come to a compromise; this is for the public good regardless of what the people who spoke thought.

Vice Chair Frautschi:

- Thanked T-Mobile for the presentation and thanked the neighbors who took the time to come to the meeting. The photographs provided by T-Mobile presented the site in the most flattering way. The most telling perspectives that affect the neighborhood, which are front-on, are not included.
- The letter that they sent to the community announcing the meeting stated that "the antennas are to be mounted on to 15' poles that are attached to six separate locations along the perimeter of the water tank." This does not mention that the final result for the total antenna height would be 58'. At first glance, one might say 15' is not so bad, but it's really 58', and he found this kind of selected information-giving kind of disconcerting and believed that they should not have done that.
- In the past applicants have requested permission to mount antennas MPWD sites and then Variances were eventually required because the antennas had to be taller. Our last round of approvals were for 56' antennas at DeKoven, which he believes now has 3 cellular sites. Now this request is for 58' and he wondered when enough is enough.
- He did not feel compelled to grant a variance to building height standards though he was prepared to do so with this project if certain conditions could be met.
- He felt there has to be some benefit in the immediate neighborhood; a neighborhood can't totally sacrifice for the rest of the City, but the larger benefit seems to be to Sterling Downs, down Hiller and in that area.
- The additional conditions, if he were to even begin to consider this, were:
  - o Landscaping has to be added around the southern perimeter of the proposed T-Mobile equipment lease area.
  - o Would support a total enclosure of the equipment
  - o There's no mention in the plans of what material is going to be used in the steps.
  - o The landscaping is not adequate.
  - o Would like to see a condition about the landscape maintenance. The plants and trees on this site seem to be under-maintained, and they are definitely lacking proper water
  - o Would like it specifically laid out when the monthly maintenance is going to occur. At other sites it has happened in the middle of the night and neighbors have complained about that.
  - o The company has to go beyond the City's standards for noise at this particular site because he would want there to be absolutely no noise impact on the neighbors. The way of supporting that would be a regular noise study.
  - o There has to be contact information for the neighbors.
- The neighbors were absolutely right about the effect on their property values; who wants to live next door to a cell site that becomes increasingly industrial looking.
- If they could move the building down the hill, there will be another carrier coming in to apply for this site.
- Did not see a clear benefit to the neighbors. He saw a benefit to the community at large but in order to balance that all out he would have to know that the applicant has done absolutely everything they could possibly do to mitigate concern of the neighbors.
- Would vote to continue looking at redesign issues.

Commissioner Mayer:

- Felt that the neighbors should have been notified within at least 500', given the controversial nature of these installations.

- Belmont receives no compensation for this, there is no particular benefit to the neighborhood, and the water tower is already a monstrosity.
- If this were to be approved, it would have to include a lot of work on the landscaping and maintenance. T-Mobile would have to put a lot more into it than is currently before them.
- Would want to move the building down further with a fully enclosed roof.
- Main concern is a low humming ambient noise. What exactly would the level be and can it be mitigated by a totally enclosed structure?
- Agreed that it should be continued.
- Not convinced about the lack of alternative locations. The other property mentioned should be considered if it is not as closely integrated into a neighborhood.

Commissioner McKenzie:

- The neighborhood outreach was very well executed and was very successful because it accomplished a result – the reaction of the people who are affected by this installation. We need to pay close attention to the residents who have come together in numbers and have brought these negatives forward.
- The 15' tower coverage brings in the Oak Knoll neighborhoods at the top of that knoll and College View Way neighborhood, and most of the benefit looked to him like the area in the lowlands. The 7' towers miss all of those except the top of Oak Knoll and definitely exclude College View Way. Looking at the coverage maps, the benefits are pretty insignificant and do not justify the negative impacts on the neighbors and others in the community. There are small pockets of benefit but it does not weigh against the impacts on other folks.
- He felt it is time for providers to start collaborating and cooperating on coverages so that the City is not inundated by coverage concerns that are caused by competing factions. Put the burden on them.
- He was not supportive of this project now or with some of the conditions that he had heard – not this expansion and certainly not at this site. He urged that they listen to the needs of the neighbors.
- Regarding the noise issue, he felt that 55 db noise continuously will downgrade the quality of life for people living in the area. The noise requirements cannot be the City's ordinance because that is not intended for continuous noise – for continuous noise levels it has to be set at significantly lower levels for quality of life.

Chair Parsons:

- Thanked T-Mobile because the people that they sent were very thorough in their presentation and gave a lot of understandable information.
- They would be putting communication facilities in a neighborhood where you have something that is going to stick up further and impinge on the view.
- The layout in terms of the support structure is ill conceived. Setting it way up on the hill when it could be buried into the ground closer down to the driveway and roofed with fewer stairs.
- It could be a more attractive structure and could have been screened.
- Wanted them consider what the coverage would be if they put the antennas flush with the top of the towers rather than sticking them above.
- It would be for the good of the public if they could get better coverage in all neighborhoods.
- The Commission tells other residents that they need to consider carefully how they use the land and how they design their project. He could not approve this project the way it is; it needs a lot more research. They have to consider quality of life of the neighbors who are most affected, the use of the steep hillsides, and the nature of views on the ridgelines, etc.
- Would support looking at this project again to see what the antennas would look like if they were not any higher than the existing water district towers.

CDD de Melo felt that, given the range of issues that have been illustrated by the Commission and the public, it would be prudent to continue to a date uncertain, so staff can meet with the applicant, and perhaps the applicant will want to have another outreach meeting and consider potential notice issues.

MOTION: By Commissioner Wozniak, seconded by Commissioner McKenzie, to continue to a date uncertain the application for a Conditional Use Permit, Variance and Design Review at 1906 Lyon Avenue (Appl. PA-2007-0006) to consider all of the comments by the public and by Planning Commissioners.

Ayes: Wozniak, McKenzie, Horton, Mayer, Mercer, Frautschi, Parsons  
Noes: None

Motion passed 7/0

Chair Parsons called for a 2-minute recess. Meeting reconvened.

6B. PUBLIC HEARING – 1007 Muir Way

To consider a Single Family Design Review for a 1,400 square-foot addition to the existing 1,914 square-foot single-family residence for a total of 3,315 square feet that is below than the maximum permitted 3,500 square feet for this site.

Appl. No. 06-0098; APN: 043-144-170; Zoned: R-1B (Single Family Residential)

CEQA Status: Categorical Exemption per Section 15301

Applicant: Naji Sedyr

Owner(s): Milad Dalo

Project Planner: Damon DiDonato (650) 637-2908

SP DiDonato summarized the Staff Report, noting that staff recommended approval but believed that building bulk, hardscape and landscaping were considered “close calls” and called for additional discussion. He added that a comment from an adjacent property owner in opposition to the project had been placed on the dais. The neighbor felt that the architectural style was not consistent with the architecture in the surrounding area. Staff disagreed, noting that the neighborhood is predominately two-story homes but there are several two-story homes nearby and there is no one style.

SP DiDonato responded to questions from Commission.

Naji Rjaile, applicant/designer, addressed the Commission, stating that he has been working with staff to resolve the issue of bulk while keeping the original concept of the house intact and keeping the client happy at the same time. He believed that they had achieved that – all parties involved to this point are happy with the finished product. The architecture is a mixed style borrowed from Spanish/Mediterranean/California; a lot of different styles. Commissioner Mercer asked how he intended to address the visibility issues of the two upstairs windows that have the most street frontage opening into a bathroom and closet. Mr. Rjaile stated that frosted glass in the bathroom would limit the visibility to the inside while still providing light. SP DiDonato suggested that another possible solution might be to flip the rooms and put the bathroom and closet behind and the bedroom at the front of the house.

Mr. Rjaile agreed with Chair Parsons that it is an error on the plans where it appears that the window on the right-hand side of the front of the house goes all the way to the corner. Chair Parsons commented that the plans are hard to read; the first floor does not have enough shading to see where the openings are, there are too many inconsistencies and not enough detail on materials.

Chair Parsons opened the Public Hearing. No one came forward to speak.

MOTION: By Vice Chair Frautschi, seconded by Commissioner Wozniak, to close the Public Hearing. Motion passed 7/0.

Commissioner Wozniak felt that the project should be continued for re-design, and that the Commission should give the applicant a list of issues. Her main issue is that the front façade is not in proportion and the conglomeration of materials also adds to a confusing look.

Commissioner Mercer felt that it is a confusing house: Different kinds of windows—some mullioned, some are not; Different kinds of railing—some sculpted and some not; French Provincial quoins down the side but California Ranch roofing materials. She was also concerned about the arrangement of the rooms upstairs. Frosted glass on the front of the house further adds to the inconsistency. She felt that the applicant has done themselves a disservice by pulling the front door all the way out to the front of the building, losing the current covered entry—there is nowhere for a caller to stand on a front porch with any kind of seclusion or safety from weather or to feel welcomed. The back porch is not integrated into the yard – does not have good access to encourage use of the yard around the house. The first floor has a tremendous amount of square footage wasted in the bedroom hallway. She could not make Finding A about it being consistent with the site or consistent with itself and concurred with staff’s evaluation that 60% hardscape is excessive. They could removal all of the concrete on the side yard and reduce the patio in the back. She could not make Finding B 3 about the hardscape and would prefer to see this project continued.

Commissioner Horton concurred that they need to continue this item for redesign. She could not make Finding B for bulk or for hardscape or Finding A. She does not think that every house in a neighborhood should look alike but she did not think this one looked like anything in particular and did not fit. She felt that they need to remove a lot of hardscape, add more landscaping, add big trees in front yard to mitigate the bulk, and come back with a redesign due to windows that don't match, a front face that has 3 different styles and a front door and a garage that are not detailed. She did not think the existing garage door goes with the rest of the house, felt that the entry made the house look even bigger and that the railings in the front of the house do not match each other. The deck on the front of the house does not go with the style of the house. The house needs to be designed in detail; a big house on a lot like this needs to be beautiful.

Vice Chair Frautschi commented that the 8'-9'-high fence on the north side of the property is a code enforcement issue and expected that Code Enforcement will make them remove the metal thing on top of the fence. SP DiDonato responded that the Code Enforcement Department has been notified.

Vice Chair Frautschi noted that the Staff Report points out that the project was deemed incomplete on 5 separate occasions starting in December – this tells him that the applicant and the architect aren't listening to staff's advice and direction. He reiterated that the house is too bulky, they have to reduce the height of the entryway and the additional upper story setbacks, the window types don't match, the railings don't match, and the quoins along the vertical angles of the exterior walls of the house are troublesome because they make the house appear even boxier and negate the setback that they are trying to achieve. He also recommends that they follow staff's advice and reduce the hardscape. 60% places an additional burden on the surrounding properties when water runs off, it doesn't acoustically dampen the noise so that your noise affects your neighbors more because hard surfaces make it bounce, and also it is not generally environmentally sensitive. A final problem with this is that the landscape and the maintenance of this property are abysmal; it appears to him that the front yard has been abandoned. He would expect that along with the hardscape removal they will landscape those areas, there will be some sort of heritage type trees that are going to reduce the bulk and there will be a full irrigation system. He could not support Findings A, B or C. He was not a certain how he could support a continuation for redesign if he did not hear something from the applicant that they are willing to take seriously what the Commission is telling them about this property.

Commissioner Mayer felt that everything has been said and he had nothing to add.

Commissioner McKenzie agreed with the preceding remarks, adding that the first floor deck had no functionality or purpose for being there. He did not feel that the proposal passed an architectural design review; the design did not work.

Chair Parsons stated that the house is too big, too inconsistent, too much hardscape, and overwhelms the site.

Mr. Rjaile addressed the Commission, stating that a lot of the things the Commission was shooting down were things that were suggested by the previous plan checker. The quoins and medallions were added per previous plan checkers to bring down the bulk, including the offsets on the side. A lot of the features that are on there now weren't there originally. The reason they went through five plan checks is that the communication was not there with the previous planner. He felt lost as to where to go from here but was willing to work on the design, but was not sure what they need to do as there are no specific guidelines for bulk. He appreciated the criticism and was willing to work on it more.

CDD de Melo commented that the City is on its way to working on residential design guidelines and that staff is putting together examples of residential design guidelines from other cities and would be happy to share those pieces of information with this applicant so that they can have a better roadmap and get this project on solid footing. He asked that the Commission give staff a chance to work with this applicant one more time.

Speaking on behalf of the Commission, Chair Parsons commented to the applicant that part of the issue of bulk has to do with the volume of the building. They have a lot of new very large rooms on the second floor that do not necessarily improve the function of the property and are much bigger than similar type of rooms in the neighborhood. In order to reduce the bulk they would need to reduce the size of the second floor and step it back further from the existing edge of the house. He added there is no style on this house – it is a

conglomeration and needs to be more consistent. He added that the Commission looks forward to them coming back with a better project.

MOTION: By Commissioner Mercer, seconded by Commissioner Wozniak, to continue the Single-Family Design Review at 1007 Muir Way (Appl. 2006-0098) to date uncertain.

Ayes: Mercer, Wozniak, Horton, Mayer, McKenzie, Frautschi, Parsons  
Noes: None

Motion passed 7/0

#### 6C. PUBLIC HEARING – 3418 Hillcrest Drive

To consider a Single Family Design Review to construct a 1,027 square foot detached accessory building (garage/workshop). The existing dwelling (2,048 square feet) and the proposed accessory building would have a total proposed floor area of 3,075 square feet that is below the zoning district permitted 3,500 square feet for this site.

Appl. No. 2007-0028; APN: 045-121-240; Zoned: R-1B (Single Family Residential)

CEQA Status: Categorical Exemption per Section 15303

Applicant: Katie Cormie

Owners: Andrew & Erika Westwood

Project Planner: Rob Gill (650) 598-4204

AP Gill summarized the staff report, recommending approval subject to the conditions attached, and answered questions of the Commission.

In reply to several questions from the Commission John Hamblin, Hamblin Architecture, explained that the reason for the concrete bridge around the tree is that the Landscape Plan specified that anything soft would crush the roots. They are trying to maintain the approach to the existing garage for now, but the intent is to abandon that garage in the future and convert it into a room. He had not examined the proposed workshop and garage area for any sort of granny unit but the size of it does not seem to fit any kind of space for habitable use; it is intended to be a man's space so the owner can tinker with woodwork and his car.

Chair Parsons opened the Public Hearing. No one came forward to speak.

MOTION: By Vice Chair Frautschi, seconded by Commissioner Horton, to close the Public Hearing. Motion passed 7/0.

Vice Chair Frautschi commented that the property is poorly maintained. He was uncertain if he could find for Finding E that has to do with the integrating the driveway and parking surfaces into the overall project design. The 2 entrances and 3 parking garages seemed unusual to him and he would have preferred to see the room converted and removal of the paved area in front. He felt it was a lot of hardscape and would want to see a Final Landscape Plan showing the removal of the circular driveway and additional landscaping with more trees in the front.

Commissioner Mayer felt it was odd to be putting so many resources into this added structure when the main property is in such bad shape. He felt that the two driveways are peculiar and hoped that it will be clarified when plans come back.

Commissioner McKenzie: felt that the footprint of the structure was strange and the functionality of the opposing garage entrances puzzled him. He was concerned about what would happen if both cars backed out at the same time. He suggested that if they could limit the building to a one-car garage they could eliminate the protrusion for the second car, and if they have a garage already they could have a two-car garage by eliminating the nose on the detached building.

Commissioner Mercer felt it was a lovely garage but that it was too bad the whole house does not look that good. She could not make Finding E with respect to the garage being integrated into the overall project design since she could not understand its relationship to the house. She said they could mitigate the landscaping, irrigate, and do the code abatement things that need to be done but it still will not make that



structure integrated with the house. She needed something to come back that would make it work together as a package.

Commissioner Wozniak could not make Findings A or E. She felt that was fine if they want to have a garage half as big as the house, but it seemed odd to her that they are putting all this money into a building at the back of the house. She noted that there would not be much square footage left if they wanted to add to the actual house. She did not believe this accessory building fits in the neighborhood, adding that even if the structure is attractive it cannot be seen from the front. She suggested that it might be better if it was just a workshop and not a garage.

Commissioner Horton agreed that it is odd but did not have an issue making the findings. She hoped that, as the architect said, this is a step toward a renovation process. Her guess was that the garage at the main house will convert to living space. The project will at least clean up the front of the site and she could not find a reason to deny.

Chair Parsons wished that the owner would spend some time putting some detail on the outside of the house and commented that it is a blight on the neighborhood. He had trouble making the finding with respect to its integration. He felt that the landscape plan was not consistent or clear, and questioned how he could support a project that is not integrated. He preferred to continue this project and have it come back with a more consistent plan that integrates the house with the structure that they are trying to build so it is an integrated facility. Now they have one really nice looking property and another that does not seem to match at all.

MOTION: By Vice Chair Frautschi, seconded by Commissioner Mayer, to continue the Single-Family Design Review at 3418 Hillcrest Drive (Appl. 2007-0028), with the addition of a condition that the a modification to the deed be recorded to reflect that the accessory building cannot be used as habitable floor space, and that it is understood that something will be done to the existing house to dress it up.

Ayes: Frautschi, Mayer, McKenzie, Mercer, Wozniak, Parsons

Noes: Horton

Motion passed 6/1

## 7. REPORTS, STUDIES AND UPDATES

CDD de Melo reported as follows:

### 7A. NDNU (Koret) Athletic Field

The third neighborhood meeting was scheduled for the following day.

### 7B. Avanti Pizza Commercial Center – 2040 Ralston Avenue

No report.

### 7C. US 101/ Marine Parkway Landscaping Project

He had a productive meeting the previous day with Planning Commissioners, architects from CalTrans and via phone Councilmember Dickenson to talk about next steps related to that project.

### 7D. U-Haul – 530 El Camino Real

The tree was leaning to one side two weeks ago and now it is leaning to the other side. We will try to get that reconciled.

### 7E. Motel 6 – 1101 Shoreway Road

A meeting was scheduled for the following day with the Police Department and the security detail personnel with Motel 6 to talk about the range of issues.

Thanked the Commissioners for participating on the recent RDA bus tour. He felt there was great feedback by all participants, and especially thanked Commissioner Mercer for her written comments.

Announced that former Zoning Technician Rob Gill has been promoted to Assistant Planner.

Commissioner McKenzie commented on the total demolition/rehab of the house 655 South Road and asked that this site be placed on a future agenda under Reports, Studies and Updates.

Commissioner McKenzie noted that a project at 800 Miramar Place at the corner of South Road had been approved by the Commission as a two-story remodel has been executed as a one-floor plan. CDD de Melo agreed to add this to a future agenda.

Chair Parsons asked that staff follow up on the condition of two houses under construction on Ralston between Coronet and Cipriani. Both houses are for sale and there is a large trash pile that is a safety hazard and vermin habitat that needs to be cleaned up.

Commissioner Wozniak asked if staff had the results of the noise study done at a recent Notre Dame game. CDD de Melo suggested that she call his office after the NDNU meeting to be held the following day.

Vice Chair Frautschi asked when the Commission can expect to receive the Mid Peninsula Water District Folger landscape enhancement. CDD de Melo will try to get it to them at one of the next two meetings. VC Frautschi added that he would like to see the work completed before the rainy season. Chair Parsons added that MPWD was going to put additional landscaping in along the sidewalk on Ralston because the water runs down the street every time they water and will get worse when the rainy season comes. CDD de Melo agreed to follow up on that as well.

#### 8. CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2007

Liaison: Commissioner Mayer  
Alternate Liaison: Commissioner Wozniak

#### 9. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m. to a Regular Planning Commission Meeting on Tuesday, October 2, 2007, at 7:00 p.m. in Belmont City Hall.

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Carlos de Melo  
Planning Commission Secretary

CD's of Planning Commission Meetings are available in the  
Community Development Department.

Please call (650) 595-7416 to schedule an appointment.